



**MINUTES**  
**Economic Development Authority**  
**August 18, 2020**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Economic Development Authority meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

**Present:** Chair: Jahn Dyvik; Vice Chair: Lori Goodsell; Board: Tom Skjaret, Deirdre Kvale, and Charlie Miner

*Due to the COVID-19 health pandemic, the Economic Development Authority attended this meeting telephonically pursuant to Minn. Statute 13D.021.*

**Staff Present:** City Administrator/Executive Director: Scott Weske (in person); City Attorney: John Thames (telephonic)

**Absent:** Board: Tim Hultmann and Michelle Jerde (both with prior notice)

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**APPROVE AGENDA**

*A motion was made by Miner, seconded by Goodsell, to approve the agenda. Ayes: all by roll call.*

**CONSENT AGENDA**

*A motion was made by Skjaret, seconded by Miner, to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2020 EDA meeting. Ayes: all by roll call.*

**OPEN CORRESPONDENCE**

None.

**BUSINESS ITEMS**

**Approval of First Amendment to Purchase Agreement with Lifestyle Communities, LLC**

John Thames, City Attorney, gave a brief summary of the First Amendment to the Purchase Agreement with Lifestyle Communities, LLC. He explained that this was discussed at the last EDA meeting and simply adds 60 days to the timeline for meeting obligations of the existing agreement. He noted that it does not extend the purchaser's due diligence period, but will align the two deadlines to maximize the City's flexibility in reviewing this to make sure everything is in order. He stated that the amendment has been executed by Lifestyle Communities and staff is looking for approval by the EDA, with the EDA's approval to be ratified by the Council as a Consent Agenda item.

*A motion was made by Skjaret, seconded by Goodsell to approve the First Amendment to Purchase Agreement with Lifestyle Communities, LLC.*

Board member Skjaret noted that the original timeline showed a zoning amendment happening in September. He asked if that was still accurate and if this amendment would affect that.

City Attorney Thames stated that this will not affect that and reiterated that this is just an adjustment for the City's review time period and does not affect the zoning review law time periods.

Ben Landhauser, Lifestyle Communities, stated that their land use application was submitted last week with the intent that they would on the agendas for both Planning Commission and City Council in September. He indicated that their submitted application includes rezoning as well as Preliminary Plat.

Chair Dyvik questioned whether a 60-day extension will be enough.

Mr. Landhauser stated that he stated that he believes they will be able to hit the projected timelines with the 60-day extension.

Board member Goodsell asked about the finished product plans. She explained that she had missed the last EDA meeting because she was in Colorado. She noted that while she was there, she saw a beautiful condo building that just blended right into the landscape. She stated that she would like to pass along a gentle suggestion with a photograph she took of that building in Colorado.

Mr. Landhauser suggested that she send the photograph directly to him at [ben@thislifestyle.com](mailto:ben@thislifestyle.com).

Executive Director Weske asked Board member Goodsell to submit the photograph to him and he will make sure Mr. Landhauser and all of the other EDA members get a copy of the picture.

*Ayes: all by roll call.*

### **Other EDA Business**

Board member Goodsell asked when the EDA may be able to return to regular, in-person, meetings. She stated that she thought she had heard that Orono was returning to in person meetings.

Executive Director Weske stated that he does not think the City will be returning to in-person meetings for the foreseeable future. He indicated that this may be a question for the head of Emergency Management, Fire Chief Van Eyll. He pointed out that the biggest issue is that he is not able to keep everyone socially distanced in the current City Hall.

Chair Dyvik asked if there could be a hybrid solution where a few members are present at City Hall and the rest join via Zoom.

Executive Director Weske stated that if they choose to go that route, it would be easier to have a few members present at City Hall, but continue to keep the City Hall closed to public and allow them to speak under Open Correspondence via Zoom. That said, a hybrid solution does present some technology challenges that would need to be resolved.

Board member Skjaret asked if there was anything that the EDA would like to start planning for the former gas station property since it looks as though it will not be sold in the immediate future.

Executive Director Weske noted that someone had reached out to him earlier this week expressing some interest, but he has not seen any plans yet.

Board member Skjaret stated that he is thinking of something like a pathway or a picnic table and bench. He stated that he was simply looking to do something to make it look better than just a gravel patch filled with weeds.

Board member Miner suggested that the EDA wait and see what the fall and winter months have in store and if there isn't any traction on the property then they can take a look at some things that could be done to the site as Board member Skjaret is suggesting.

Board member Goodsell asked if there was a more effective way to market the property so the EDA can get that property sold more quickly.

Executive Director Weske stated that there is a sign up and believes that he believes it has been picked up by Loopnet.

Chair Dyvik asked if there was a way to market the property through the League of Minnesota Cities.

Executive Director Weske noted that most of the things that are on the League of Minnesota Cities are RFPs or items for sale, such as street lights. He stated that he can take a look around and see if there are other government sites where the property could be listed. He added that he would hesitate to post listings because there is still not a price for the property nor has the City determined what they would like to see in this location. He stated that the EDA has not had a single conversation about that so it may be premature to market the property heavily when those details have not yet been determined.

Board member Miner suggested that this discussion be added to an upcoming EDA agenda.

Executive Director Weske explained that Lifestyle Communities had submitted land use applications for Preliminary Plat, Rezoning to PUD, and a TIF application for the Virginia Avenue project. He stated that the study has been completed and the property will qualify for a redevelopment TIF district, but there is still a lot of work yet to be completed related to TIF. He stated that he believes the timeline for completion of the TIF is going to be December or January.

Mr. Landhauser stated that they submitted a full application packet of information that includes site information, architectural information, and perspective renderings of the entire campus. He noted that they have been talking to the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District about stormwater management and water quality improvement in the area. He stated that it is not their intent, nor is it a necessity, to have the TIF district established before they satisfy their due diligence or close on the City property.

Board member Miner asked if there were any updates on the discussion with the homeowner at 525 Virginia Avenue.

Mr. Landhauser stated that he has had conversations with her and he received a letter from her consenting to be part of the rezoning application and Preliminary Plat review. He stated that she is comfortable being part of that process, but is still uncomfortable committing to a sale right now.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

## **ADJOURN**

*Hearing no objection, Chair Dyvik adjourned the meeting by general consent at 5:31 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Scott Weske, Executive Director